

I. BACKGROUND

Since the Washington State AIDS Omnibus bill was passed in 1988, Public Health - Seattle & King County (Public Health) has conducted an annual or bi-annual competitive Request-for Proposal (RFP) process for HIV/AIDS funding. An Omnibus Steering Committee, appointed by the Director of Public Health, advised on allocation of Omnibus funds to community-based organizations (CBOs), and provided annual review of proposals for Omnibus funding until the summer of 1992. Upon receipt of federal Ryan White Titles I and II dollars in August 1992, the HIV/AIDS Planning Council was formed in response to federal mandates and to better coordinate region-wide planning and prioritization processes for both care and prevention/education (P/E) services.

In 1994, under a new community prevention planning initiative from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the HIV/AIDS Planning Council (PC) was designated by the Washington State Department of Health as the regional CDC Planning Group responsible for establishing prevention priorities for CDC funds, allocated in King County.

In terms of representation, the PC meets the requirements of the Ryan White Title I legislation and CDC guidelines for Planning Group representation. It also is representative in terms of gender, race, HIV/AIDS target populations, care and P/E services, sexual orientation, geography, agency and community representatives, and HIV/AIDS professionals. The PC, comprised of a maximum of forty members, has adopted P/E priorities that will guide King County allocation decisions for State AIDS Omnibus, Federal CDC and King County and City of Seattle General Fund P/E funds for 2004-05. These P/E priorities were developed by a subcommittee of the PC and approved by the PC in May 2003. **The PC-adopted prioritization plan can be found in Appendix I.**

Public Health is now responsible for conducting the allocation process. Public Health will request and review applications and will convene an allocation panel consisting of approximately 20 non-conflicted (based on King County Code of Ethics) community members, plus two Public Health employees familiar with HIV/AIDS issues, to review and rate all proposals. In a discussion with HIV/AIDS Program staff, the allocation panel will then make recommendations for funding to the Public Health Director. Upon approval, funding will be awarded to agencies with notification of awards by late October.

II. AVAILABLE FUNDS

The funding period for these funds is January 1, 2004 – December 31, 2005. Assumptions about the availability of funds are subject to change, particularly as Public Health makes provisional allocation awards prior to knowing the actual amount of dollars available from fund sources. The actual amount of local, CDC and Omnibus funds will not be confirmed until early 2004 for the year 2004, and early 2005 for the year 2005. **This RFP assumes that there will be a combined total of \$3,400,000 available for the two-year project period.**

III. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- A. Funding through this P/E RFP process can be used to reach populations in King County only.
- B. Programs must address one of the priority populations and interventions as adopted by the PC in May 2003 (see Appendix I).
- C. Programs should adhere to the principles underlying the P/E system, or provide a rationale for not adhering to these principles (Appendix V).

- D. Only public or private non-profit (501)(c)(3) agencies or their fiscal agents are eligible for funding.
- E. Previous receipt of funds is not a guarantee of future funding.
- F. Funds may not be used to supplant existing available agency funds.
- G. Capital projects and research studies will not be funded.

IV. REQUEST-FOR-PROPOSAL (RFP) PROCESS AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- A. This single HIV/AIDS P/E competitive RFP process for 2004-05 incorporates four potential funding sources-- CDC, State Omnibus, King County, and City of Seattle P/E dollars. The applicant need not differentiate among these funding sources in the application.
- B. An agency may submit one or more proposals per priority population. The proposals should address the designated priority subpopulations and interventions for each population. An agency may decide to submit more than one proposal per population if the intervention and/or special needs of the group are so different that one proposal cannot suffice. This is entirely up to the discretion of the agency. The definitions of the intervention strategies are found in Appendix II. Definitions of target populations are found in the Glossary (Appendix XIII). Questions should be directed to Karen Hartfield or Barb Gamble at 296-4649.
- C. Collaborative applications are strongly encouraged. Collaborating applicants are defined as partners who will potentially share the awarded funds, or as applicants who will cooperate in offering P/E programs. Only one of the collaborative partner agencies will receive funds and will then subcontract to other partners for the provision of services or programs.
Subcontracting agencies may claim administrative expenses (not to exceed 15% of direct expenses) if they provide appropriate justification in the budget narrative section.
- D. Please include letters of collaboration from collaborating agencies only; general letters of support from other agencies or individuals for your proposals are not required, and, if submitted, will **not be included** in the review process.
- E. Public Health will make every attempt to streamline the contracting process. However, it is expected that selected applicants commence contract negotiations within a reasonable period of time (15 days from receipt of award letter). Failure to do so may result in the applicant forfeiting its award.
- F. Public Health, as the grantee and awarding authority, may cancel this RFP or reject all proposals at any time prior to or during the proposal review process if Public Health determines it to be in the best interest of the King County community.
- G. After the issuance of award letters, any applicant whose proposal was not funded may request an opportunity to (a) discuss with Public Health staff the reasons for not being selected and (b) examine proposals and the list of awards. Such requests must be submitted in writing to Bob Wood, MD, HIV/AIDS Program, 400 Yesler Way, 3rd Floor, Seattle, WA, 98104 by December 15, 2003. Such requests are not considered appeals. **Award decisions are final and may not be appealed.**
- H. If Public Health or the Allocation Panel determines that no satisfactory proposals have been received for a prioritized population, either may recommend that Public Health set aside

funding and negotiate with another applicant or an outside vendor to include this particular service as part of their service package.

V. APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. LETTERS OF INTENT

Letters of intent are due on Monday, July 28, 2003. Applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to submit letters of intent. Please submit a paragraph or two stating the following:

- The population and sub-population(s) you plan to target
- The intervention strategy you intend to implement
- Brief (one paragraph) description of your intervention

Submit letters by e-mail, mail or fax to Karen Hartfield, 400 Yesler Way, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98104 (fax: 206-205-5281) (e-mail Karen.Hartfield@metrokc.gov).

B. PROPOSAL DUE DATE

Proposals are due by Friday, August 29, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. FAX applications will not be accepted. E-mail applications will not be accepted. Late applications will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions.

Submit a total of 12 copies (an original and nine (11) additional copies) to:

HIV/AIDS Program
Public Health - Seattle & King County
400 Yesler Way, 3rd floor
Seattle, Washington 98104

C. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The HIV/AIDS Program will sponsor one Bidders' Conference and one Technical Assistance Workshop.

- Bidders' Conference: **All applicants are strongly encouraged to attend.** Staff will review the application packet and offer technical assistance to applicant agencies. The conference will be held on Monday, July 21st from 9-12 at the King County Administration Building, 5th and James, Maynard Room, 2nd Floor.
- Technical Assistance Workshop: Staff will hold a workshop on grantwriting, budgeting and evaluation basics. Attendees will be directed to resources for further assistance. The workshop will be held on Wednesday, July 30th from 1-3 at the Safeco Center, 306 23rd Avenue South. **All applicants are strongly encouraged to attend.**

Individuals who cannot attend may request workshop materials.

Technical assistance is available through the HIV/AIDS Resource Library at the HIV/AIDS Program (400 Yesler Way, 3rd Floor). This Library has copies of effective HIV prevention

program models and protocols, and additional information on grantwriting and evaluation. Contact Larry Keil at 296-4649 for an appointment to view the resources. Additional information is available on the HIV/AIDS Program Internet web site (<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/apu>). Jim Kent, epidemiologist for Public Health, is also available to provide epidemiological data that may help your application. She can be reached at 296-4645, or via e-mail at jim.kent@metrokc.gov.

A computer workstation in the Resource Library may be reserved for applicants during the proposal writing period. Applicants may phone 296-4649 to reserve a block of time to work on their proposals, or may walk in to use the computer. Computer workstations have Internet access, as well as Microsoft Office 97.

D. PROPOSAL REVIEW

- HIV/AIDS Program staff will initially review proposals for technical compliance with the RFP. The technical review will pay particular attention to issues of completeness, accuracy, and clarity. It will assess information provided about finances, previous performance and adherence to priorities. **Proposals that do not address the priorities listed in Appendix I will be rejected and not sent on for further review.**
- An Allocation Panel, appointed by Public Health and composed of non-conflicted community members and Public Health employees, will subsequently review all proposals. After discussion with HIV/AIDS Program staff, the panel will make allocation recommendations to the Public Health Director for adoption.
- Be sure to thoroughly check all numbers and statistics throughout the application. Information from tables and appendices (e.g., budget figures, client demographics, personnel information) should be consistent with information cited in narrative format. Inaccurate or inconsistent figures and calculations will be highlighted during the Technical Review and may negatively impact the proposal's rating.
- Follow page limits indicated by the instructions. **A font size of 12 points or larger is required for narrative text, although 10-point type is acceptable on grids and tables. All narrative sections must have at least one-inch margins on all sides.** Applicants may download forms from the HIV/AIDS Program Internet web site (<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/apu>). Forms are also available on disk in **Microsoft Word 97 and Excel 97** (Please call 296-4649 to request a disk).

E. RATING CRITERIA

- Proposals will be rated according to criteria in three general categories: (1) proposed program, including populations targeted and intervention strategy selection (2) budget and (3) agency financial capability. These criteria correspond to specific sections of the application. The Allocation Panel will assign a maximum of 90 rating points based on the responses to questions in Proposed Program and Program Budget. HAP grants and contracts staff will assign a maximum of 10 points for Agency Information. The section of the RFP titled "Application Instructions and Rating Criteria" contains the specific rating criteria. The table below summarizes the categories of rating criteria, the maximum

points allotted to each category, the forms where these criteria are most likely to be addressed and the pages in the Instructions where the specific criteria can be found.

Table 1: Proposal Rating Categories			
Rating Categories	Maximum Possible Points	Relevant Forms	Instruction Pages (Green)
Proposed Program	75 points	3; 4A, 4B	9 - 14
Program Budget	15 points	6A, 6B; 7A, 7B; 8A, 8B	16 - 22
Agency Information	10 points	9	23 - 25

- Allocation Panel members shall independently assign scores to the program and budget sections in accordance with the rating criteria, within funding allocation and priority constraints. Proposals will not be evaluated against one another, but will rather be evaluated against the established rating criteria. In addition to the proposal's score in this rating system, the Panel may consider several other factors in making funding recommendations. These additional factors may include funding principles, proposed cost of service delivery, and past program performance. The Review Panel reserves the right to award funding to lower scoring applicants in order to obtain a specialized service or otherwise meet a specified need not effectively addressed by proposals with higher scores.

VI. NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

By **late-October 2003**, Public Health will notify applicants in writing of whether or not their proposal has been approved and at what funding level. Program staff will request program plan revisions of successful applicants at that time.

VII. CONTRACT MEETINGS

Contract meetings with successful applicants will occur after all program revisions are submitted and draft contract exhibits are completed. The purpose of the meeting will be to clear up any outstanding programmatic and fiscal issues, and to review contract requirements. In order to ensure the delivery of more effective interventions, Public Health reserves the right to alter the scope of work from that presented in the original proposal. Please be aware that we expect contract meetings to begin two weeks following notification of award.

VIII. CONTRACTUAL AND MONITORING OBLIGATIONS

Public Health will require agencies receiving awards to comply with all King County contracting requirements and with any requirements imposed by the funding sources throughout the award period (see Appendix X).